

A

REVIEW

OF THE

Affairs of FRANCE:

Purg'd from the Errors and Partiality of *New-Writers*
and *Petty-State-men*, of all Sides.

Tuesday, July 4. 1704.

IT seems to me something hard, That
the Impatient World cannot refrain
their Conclusions, before I am come
to mine.

This I find is the effect of Writing a History by Inches ; Mankind expects every piece should be entire, and bear a reading by it self : If it must be so, I confess my self incapable ; the Scheme is otherways laid, and a half Sheet of Paper can't do it.

My Design in this History of the French Affairs, is as vast in Proportion, as theirs in Contriving ; and as it requires time to finish, it ought to have the Privilege of being view'd whole, before 'tis condemn'd.

Asking his Pardon for the Allusion, I take my self to be just in Sir Christopher Wren's Case, about the Building of St. Paul's.

People look upon the great Trunk of the Building, without its Head on, and find a Thousand faults in it, which perhaps are not there ; some say, the Windows are too small, others say the Columns are too Gross ; some say 'tis a great, clumsy, unshapable thing, others, 'tis Built more like a Castle than a Church ; in short, no body likes it ; Not but that the Building is regular, exact, and may be every way proportioned ; but as

their heavy imagination can supply nothing, they judge of what appears, and not of what is design'd.

If my Review of the Affairs of France was finish'd and Compleat, and to be read altogether, I would take my Fate with the Book, and venter it upon the general Caudor ; not but that it may offend some, but I would run the risque of my head, upon this Article, That no Man should say I was in the French Interest, or Magnify'd the Enemy too much.

The necessary Consequences I shall draw from their *real Greatness*, the just Hints I shall give of their *Intended Greatness* ; the Satyr I shall make on their *Imaginary Greatness*, and the Schemes I shall draw for the preventing their Encreasing Power, will effectually clear me from the suspitions of serving my Country ill, or Encouraging the Enemy.

But since all Men are not equally Inform'd, I venture thus once more on the Patience of the Reader, desiring him to suffer an Interruption of Story, and admit me, for the sake of such, who without Personal Prejudice, mistake my Meaning, or suspect my Principles, thus farther to Explain my self in this particular Article of Magnifying the French Power.

M m

I have

I have always been of the Opinion, That our slighting, or not rightly understanding the Greatness, the Power, the Policy, the Conduct and Management of our Enemies, has been one of the most Fatal Errors of our Age.

I think no Man in so much Danger as he that is to fight an Enemy, and knows not his Strength. Our Saviour himself gives us this Caution, That when we view our own Ten Thousands, we should also consider the Twenty Thousands of our Enemies, before we go out to Warfare.

If I am demanded Examples to prove the Truth of this, I refer the Reader to the several attempted Descents at *Camaret*, *Cadiz* and *Barcelona*.

What Reproaches, what Libels, what Satyrs and Lampoons has the Government suffered from the Mouths and Pens of the Discontented People, for the miscarriages in these Places? How have we blam'd the Persons employ'd, and branded them with the Odious Names of Cowards, Betrayers of their Trust, and of the Nations Councils; and with what Contempt has the Nation in General Treated some Great Men on this Account? When tho' there may have been Knavery enough in some Cases, the Truth of the Matter has been, the Enemies Power has not been rightly discover'd. We expected to find none but Militia, and undisciplin'd Troops at *Brest* and *Camaret*; we expected few Men at *Cadiz*, and a Town easy to be taken: We expected very few Forces in *Spain*, and still fewer at *Barcelona*; but being disappointed, and finding a Power we did not look for, our Designs miscarry; we are insulted by our Enemies, and our Generals bear the Reproofs.

These were some of the Reasons which ~~some~~ made it necessary, to let the Greatness of our Enemies in a true Light, and Paint them out in their due Dimensions, *not for our Terror*, but for our just Information.

That this was a good and justifiable Reason, and for which I ought not to be Censur'd, I appeal to Ancient Example.

The Spies sent into the Land of Canaan, were not blam'd for bringing a True but a False Report of the Land.

Demosthenes was just to my Case, saying

the Arrogance of the Comparisons; he was continually setting out the Power of *Philip* of *Macedon*, to his *Athenian* Citizens; and so earnest and particular was he in telling them of their own Follies, of *Philip's* Greatness, his Policy and his Armies, that the *Athenians* were several Times going to tear him to pieces, and Demolish his House as a Friend to the *Macedonians*.

At last *Philip* made War upon the *Athenians*, who being in vain inform'd by *Demosthenes*, but slighting his Cautions, and contemning the *Macedonian* Power, were at last oblig'd to submit to a dishonourable Peace.

Now while these Ignorant *Athenians* condemn'd *Demosthenes* as a Confederate with their Enemy, it appeared, *Philip* was, of another Mind, and so Angry he was, that *Demosthenes* endeavoured to awaken the *Athenians*, with Alarm; of his Power, that when he made Peace with *Athens*, he oblig'd them, among other Meannesses, to submit to this, To Banish *Demosthenes*, or Deliver him up as an utter Enemy to *Philip*, because he had strove to inform them of the Truth.

They who pretend to charge me with favouring the *French* Interest, and being bought and brib'd with *French* Money, would do well to go into *France* and present themselves to the *French* King, as the Authors of the Review, and plead the Merit of it, I freely give them Liberty to make use of my Name, and am satisfied his Majesty will reward them with the Wheel or the Halter.

For my own Part, I believe I need not trouble my self to say, I despise *French* Brutes, as much as I apprehend *French* Power; I am none of those that betray my Country, and would have them all hang'd that do; and because I wish to see the English pull down the *French* Greatness, therefore I am willing to have them know what it is, and I scorn and defy all other Reasons for it.

I have said the *French* are strong, and we find it so, but I never said they were invincible; I wish, and hope, and pray to have 'em reduc'd to Terms of an Honourable Peace; and in telling the Truth of them, I think I Contribute as much to it, as any single Person can do.

As I have said they are not invincible, so in time I should have prov'd it, and hope to present the World with some Schemes how to make it out, which never yet saw the Light; but, Gentlemen, you must have Patience with me till I come to it, in the Order of the Work.

In short, the French are Great, Strong, Powerful, and Politick, from thence 'tis fair arguing; Let us be the last, we shall soon be the first: 'Tis want of Concert ruines Confederacies, and this in Particular; and to Draw the Enemy's Picture, is the best Method I can think of, to set us a Pattern.

This I have been aiming at, and Envy comes in to Silence the Cry; Envy always goes with Her Mouth open, and Truth can seldom shut it; but I leave it to the judicious part of Mankind, to determine whether is the best Friend to his Country, he that tells them the True strength of their Enemies, that they may prepare to Match them, or he who contemning their Strength as weak and Insignificant, lets us go under-man'd to Engage them; and so like Solomon's unwar'y Fools we pass on and are Punish'd.

I am like the Geese in the Capitول, If the Roman Soldiers should have killed them, for frightening them out of their Sleep, they would soon have found the Gauls at their backs, and have blamed themselves for the mistake. I leave all Men to judge whether those Geese Gagg'd for the Gauls, or for the Romans, and whether the Gauls, would not have been glad to have Cut their Throats, for telling the Romans who were a coming.

If I like an honest Protestant Goose have Gagg'd too loud of the French Power, and Rais'd the Country; the French indeed may have Reason to Cut my Throat if they could; but 'tis hard my own Countrymen, to whom I have shewn their Danger, and whon I have endeavour'd to wake out of their Sleep, should take offence at the Timely Discovery.

This is not, however, the first Time I have Wrote, what they for whose Good I Wrote it, would not understand — I have here explained my self; Wise Men I

hope will now understand me, and for Fools let them remain so; 'tis not my busines to Walsh Ethiopians.

The Author of this Paper has Presented to Write, thus, not for his Private advantage, but for Publick Service; he thought, as before, the best thing he could do, at a time, when we were all Embark'd in the Ship of the State, was to Examin, Describe, and Expose the Power, the Designs, the Growth, and Increase of our Enemyes.

By the Publick Service, He understands the Interest of the Queen Governing, and the People Govern'd; and as soon as ever he is convinc'd, this Paper is in the least Injurious or displeasing to Either; he will Demonstrate the Truth of what he pretends to; by laying it down.

He has carefully prescrib'd himself to positive Truth, and has the Satisfaction of not being Charg'd with one Mistake in Fact; a common Capacity may make a Wise Man Wiser, but for braying Fools in a Mortar, SOLOMON has told us 'tis to no Purpose.

This Paper is Writ to Men of Candor and Charity, and those that have neither, who can Write to please them!

I am very far from saying or believing that our War with Spain is not just; nay if I thought otherwise, yet since, the Nation is Embark'd in it, I would not shew so little Respect to the English Reputation, as to make my Opinion Publick.

I Rejoyce the QUEEN is sensible the Dependance in this Case is to be wholly on Her own Strength, and is therefore Ordering more Forces to enable the Confederate Army, to detect the Dishonesty of some People abroad, and to make the attempt with a more rational Prospect.

In the Case of the Confederate Fleet, I thought no one could have mistaken me, while I Wrote a Satyr on the Paris Gazerte and the French Admiral, and imagin'd I was on their side; to such I only desire they would put Spectacles upon their understandings, and read it again; and if on a second Reading, they please to let me hear the Reasons of their Opinion, that they are neither Privolous or Malicious,

I shall not fail to Explain my self farther.
In the mean time I hope this may serve
to prove the Reason of what I have said, the

Principle from which I have said it, and
give all Impartial Judgments full Satisfaction.

A D V I C E from the Scandalous C L U B.

Several Letters having been sent us with Objections against our Title, the Society had resolv'd to answer no more, till the Gentlemen Objectors had reply'd to the Reasons given by our Club, for making use of the Title; but the Candor of the following Objectors forc'd us to give the World the trouble of reading the Arguments.

Gentlemen,

I thought I had reason in disliking the Title (SCANDALOUS CLUB;) because that Expression seem'd to make the Scandal rest upon your selves; having never met with the Word (SCANDALOUS) in the compass of my small Reading, but in a passive Sense.

I have looked back to the Paper you refer me to for your Defence, where I find all the flourish of Wit that an ill Title wants, but not all the strength of Argument that a good one ought to have: Wherefore upon the whole, I would Recommend you to quit a Title that is so dispusible and precarious, and that is like to give you trouble, for one that is less intricate and obscure, and liable to no Exception.

Your Humble Servant,

June 28. 1704.

J. F.
To which the Society say, they think this is no Reply to their Reasons, and that tho' the word *Scandalous* is not frequently found, but in a Positive Sence, yet while the Practice of taking any word, and making it a Phrase or Proper Name, stands upon Record, justify'd by the Example of Milton and Dryden; We cannot think our selves answer'd by any Gentleman's saying they do not like it, without proving it an Inappropriateness in Speech, or a Boldness without Example.

Nor have any of the Objectors thought fit to oblige us with a better Title; but at last we have an Attempt of that kind from a Female hand, as we guess by the Writing; We always thought the Women had the quickest and justest Notions of things at first sight, tho' we have unjustly rob'd them

of the Judgment, by denying them early Instruction.

To this Lady, (if we mistake not) the Author has Orders to give the Thanks of the Society; and farther to acquaint her, That the Society passed a Vote on the two Queries in the same Letter in the Affirmative, and lets her know, all due Satisfaction shall be given, so far as agrees with Honour and Justice.

Upon the whole, the Society have agreed to send an Ambassador Extraordinary to Seignior Pasquin at Rome, their Patron and Protecto; to have his Approbation of the Title, or to desire him to send them a New one; and that the Message may be carried with the more splendor as well as speed; they first resolved upon an Address to the Author of the Flying-Post, to lend them one of the Miraculous Galleys which the Marquis de Minas took from the Spaniards, in the late Fight on the Borders of Castile, at least 100 Miles from the Sea. Postscript to the Flying-Post, Num. 1429.

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